

After the story is presented, students are asked to answer two questions before they attempt the multiple-choice comprehension quiz. These two questions encourage students to judge for themselves how well they understood their reading. Students should be encouraged to reread when appropriate, not only while working with Uncle Ted, but whenever they read.

The Uncle Ted series stresses reading for understanding. It is comprehension, not speed, which is valued. Students who select reading rates faster than they can handle should be encouraged to work patiently within their present skills.

Animal Stories was designed and written by professional educators. Used skillfully by the classroom teacher or special reading teacher, the Animal Stories series can be a valuable supplementary tool for helping elementary students develop and solidify their reading comprehension skills.

#### Disk Independent Modules

To minimize the need for multiple disks and to facilitate efficient usage of our materials, Micrograms programs are designed to load entirely or in disk independent modules. **This enables you to load a program into more than one computer.** With all Micrograms programs, children at several computers can use the same program simultaneously without needing to access the disk.

#### Micrograms Guarantee

Micrograms is proud of the classroom effectiveness of its offerings. We invite you to use and review our programs for 30 days. If after use and review, you feel our programs are not effective instructional tools, you may return them for a full purchase-price refund.

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# **MICROGRAMS**

## **ANIMAL STORIES SERIES**

#### Purpose and Scope

The ANIMAL STORIES programs provide students opportunities to sharpen their comprehension skills and increase their reading speeds while working at the computer. The materials may be used individually by students in the regular classroom or special reading room, or by students of similar ability working together in pairs. Textual content is controlled, and the reading level of each program is generally about a year below the grade level for which the program is recommended. Special speed keys on the computer keyboard (to be described later) allow students familiar with the program to focus more intently on the comprehension activities themselves without as much motivational assistance from Uncle Ted as is provided to beginning users.

This series was designed to provide remedial activities for weak readers. However, field testing has shown that students of average and above average abilities also are challenged by it, particularly when working on or above their own reading levels.

#### Reading Levels:

Program	Grades	Reading Levels
Animal Stories I	2-3	1.0-2.1
Story Titles: Sam the Calf, The Sick Goat, Seal Fun, Pat's Surprise, The Storm, The Lost Puppy, The Best House, The Hard Worker, Mary the Mole, The Bad Dream, The Picnic, Charlie the Chipmunk.		
Animal Stories II	3-4	2.0-3.1
Story Titles: A Friend for Sue, Teddy's Bad Day, The New Kitten, Marty the Mule, King for a Day, The Squirrel, The Contest, Rabbit Stew, Martin the Muskrat, Sarah's Pet, The Hiding Place, The Burglar.		
Animal Stories III	4-5	3.0-4.1
Story Titles: Prairie Dog Village, The Baby Cougar, Grounded, The Pronghorn, Clyde the Coyote, Quicksand!, The Peccary's Revenge, The Koala Bear, Emily's Adventure, The Journey, Benny's Best Friend, Red Fox.		



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Story Titles: Black Bear, The Injured Deer, A Close Call, The Porcupine, Otters at Play, The Beaver Family, The Manatee, The Visitor, Gray Wolf, Hunted, Challenged, The Pika.

### Program Description

Each program contains twelve one-page stories with controlled reading levels. The child chooses one of the stories from a menu and then selects the reading speed. During the reading exercise, the screen of the text is gradually erased at the speed which has been selected by the student. Four multiple-choice questions based on the story are then presented.

If students answer one or more questions incorrectly, Uncle Ted informs readers of the number of questions missed and requires that the passage be reread. The questions following the second reading may or may not be the same as those following the first reading; and, they may be presented in a different order. Uncle Ted, who can be obstinate when necessary, insists that students stay with a passage until all his questions are correctly answered. Only then does he place a scoring mark by the story title on the menu screen and permit readers to select another story to read.

### Scoring Marks

At the conclusion of each comprehension section, Uncle Ted returns to the menu. A scoring mark next to the story title indicates that the story was presented and the questions were answered correctly. A large blue box indicates that the comprehension questions were all answered correctly on the first try. A smaller green box indicates that one or more mistakes were made, but that the questions were answered correctly on the second try. A still smaller orange box lets the teacher know that the questions were presented a third time before being answered correctly. A small purple line means that four or more attempts were needed. Stories already scored may be reselected by a student in order to upgrade the comprehension rating.

### Speed Keys

As students become more involved with the comprehension activities presented by Uncle Ted, some may feel delayed by Uncle Ted's appearance on the screen from time to time. Speed keys have been provided to enable students to speed up or bypass Uncle Ted's comments if they so choose. Here are the options.

1. Pushing the SPACE BAR while Ted is talking accelerates Ted's comments.
2. Pushing the "S" key any time after Ted appears on the screen but before the story has been presented, causes the program to present the story immediately.
3. Pushing the SPACE BAR while the story passage is on the screen removes the story from the reading screen.
4. Pushing the "Q" key after the story has been removed from the screen and Ted has reappeared, causes the program to present the questions immediately.

Mastery of use of the speed keys will allow students so inclined to focus intently on the comprehension activities themselves. At the same time, other students may continue to enjoy watching all of Uncle Ted's appearances on the screen.

### Additional Convenience Keys

Three additional control features have been included in the programs to make them easier to use flexibly in a variety of school settings. First, because the Apple IIe does not have a volume control, we have included a sound control option. Pressing the *CONTROL* key and the "S" key at the same time turns the sound off if it is on, or on if it is off. This may be done whenever the program is waiting for keyboard input. Second, pushing the *OPEN APPLE* key and the *ESCAPE* key at the same time discontinues the comprehension activity and returns the student to the story menu. This, also, may be done whenever the program is accepting keyboard input. Finally, pushing the *CONTROL* key and the "C" key at the same time while the story menu is being displayed on the screen clears all the scoring marks which have been earned by the student. This feature allows the teacher to restart the program for use by another student without reloading the program from disk.

### Suggestions for Improving Student Performance

Note that when Uncle Ted reports student errors, he reports only the number of errors made. He does not reveal the exact questions responded to incorrectly. Students typically are more confident about the correctness of some responses than others, and after brief introspection, read for specific information during their second reading. Students who don't discriminate between their own confidence levels regarding answers should be encouraged to develop this awareness.